



FAIRFAX COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Kilmer Center
8102 Wolftrap Road
Vienna, Virginia 22182

November 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to support the efforts of the Regional Community Support Center (RCSC) at The Northern Virginia Training Center. Working with students with severe disabilities, autism, and mental retardation, one of the greatest challenges is to assist families in accessing appropriate medical services in the community. The RCSC has filled a tremendous void and has allowed many of our students to receive medical and dental care, psychiatric consultation, and behavioral support, from professionals familiar with the characteristics of persons with mental retardation.

This familiarity is especially important in establishing rapport with the client and creating an environment that will lead to an accurate assessment of need and treatment by qualified professionals. The RCSC accomplishes this by utilizing a core group of professionals in an efficient and effective manner.

The families of students at the Kilmer Center have accessed the services of the RCSC after exhausting community professionals, who, while well meaning, often can not get past the challenges of working with an individual with mental retardation, or are just not able to deal with the multitude of needs that they present.

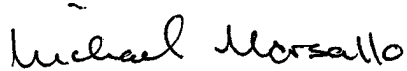
- Clients who have not been able to get proper dental care and thus have gone years without so much as a simple cleaning, have been able to get the full array of dental services through the dental clinic at Northern Virginia Training Center.
- Consultations in the psychiatric areas have led to more effective and comprehensive treatment plan from prescribing physicians. It is safe to say that without this intervention, some clients would not have been able to remain in the home and it truly has preserved the family structure.
- Behavioral observations from the psychology department have led to additional strategies in working with students with very challenging behaviors both at school and in the community, again helping to provide the client with much needed support.
- One student was able to complete an entire physical at the Training Center. For quite some time, he refused to enter his pediatrician's office and was unable to get a physical. The caring attitude, knowledge of strategies to make him feel comfortable, and competence of the people at the Training Center allowed him to complete the entire examination with no behavioral incidents.


If the concept and goals of the RCSC were to be expanded to increase the number of hours and services that are available, an even greater number of clients would be able to access them. For, in reality, due primarily to staffing constraints, most of the current services are restricted and must put a cap on the number of clients that can be seen.


By being based at the Northern Virginia Training Center, an expansion of the concept could address critical needs in other areas as well, such as respite care, gynecology, skilled nursing, neurology, geriatric and hospice services. It could also serve as a training site for other professionals (medical, dental, nursing, school personnel...) to expand their knowledge and abilities to provide services for individuals with mental retardation. By utilizing the concept of "teaching one to fish..." The RCSC could, over time, help to expand the base of people capable of treating individuals with mental retardation, thus creating equal opportunities for competent care and more options for clients in the community.

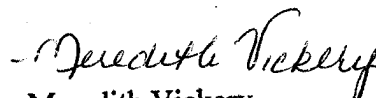
The true value of the RCSC can not be calculated by the number of services it offers, or the number of hours of consultation or direct service it provides. The true value of the RCSC is found in the individual who can successfully function in the home and community and who is a contributing member of society.


The Clinical Team at the Kilmer Center



Michael Marsallo
Principal


Ann Speidel
Vocational Coordinator


Wanda VanderNat
Psychologist


Meredith Vickery
Behavior Resource


Rose Mathes
Social Worker


Kebby Schweinsberg
School Public Health Nurse